



# USDA Role in the Preparation of Revised DOE 1605(b) Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Registry

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# On February 14, 2002, President Bush directed:


**The Secretary of Energy**, In consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Agriculture, **and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency**, to propose improvements to the current voluntary emissions reductions registration program under section 1605(b) of the 1992 Energy Policy Act...;

**The Secretary of Energy** to recommend reforms to ensure that businesses and individuals that register reductions are not penalized under future climate policy and to give transferable credits to companies that can show real reductions;

**The Secretary of Agriculture**, in consultation with the **Environmental Protection Agency** and the **Department of Energy**, to develop accounting rules and guidelines for crediting sequestration projects, taking into account emerging domestic and international approaches;

**The Secretary of Agriculture**, to develop new targeted incentives for carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reductions.





# Timeline for Public Review and Release of 1605b Guidelines

March  
'05

60  
days

**Public review of proposed revised guidelines**

**--DOE public workshop – April 26-27**

**--USDA public workshop on agriculture and forestry guidelines – May 5**


**Release of revised 1605(b) guidelines**



## Importance for USDA

- **Provides landowners with a tool to quantify and record greenhouse gas benefits of actions such as:**
  - Using no-till agriculture
  - Installing a methane digester
  - Improving nutrient management
  - Managing forestland
- **Provides opportunities for agriculture and forestry to:**
  - Partner with industry
  - Document benefits of actions for future use
  - Link reporting with conservation programs, e.g., CSP





# Components of Proposed Revised 1605(b) Guidelines

## ■ General Guidelines

- Initial draft submitted for public comment (12/03)
- Final Draft Guidelines to be issued concurrent with Proposed Technical Guidelines

## ■ Technical Guidelines

- Chapter 1: Inventory guidelines
  - Methods for quantifying sources and sinks of greenhouse gases
  - Appendices with detailed coefficients and protocols
- Chapter 2: Guidelines for emission reduction reporting
  - Methods for quantifying and registering reductions in greenhouse gases

## ■ Forms and Instructions

- Electronic and hard copies being prepared
- Are not part of public comment process



## USDA Contributions to the DOE 1605(b) Guidelines

### ■ **Inventory methods for agriculture sources**

- Enteric fermentation
- Animal waste
- Rice cultivation
- Crop residue burning
- Nutrient and lime applications

### ■ **Inventory methods for agricultural soil carbon sequestration**

- COMET model – produces default sequestration rates
- Protocols for periodic sampling





## USDA Contributions to the DOE 1605(b) Guidelines

- **Inventory methods for forest and wood products carbon stocks and fluxes**
  - Default tables by region, species, management intensity, productivity class
  - Guidance on the use of models
    - COLE model – produces default forest carbon sequestration rates
  - Measurement and sampling protocols
- **Methods for estimating reductions from carbon sequestration**



# Reductions Can be Calculated as:

- Changes in emissions intensity
- Changes in absolute emissions (if not resulting from declines in output)
- **Changes in carbon storage**
  - **“Registered Reductions” = Annual Carbon Stock Change (if positive)**
- Changes in avoided emissions (resulting from energy sales)
- Action-specific emissions reductions (when other methods are not appropriate/feasible)
- Reductions associated with “emission-free” energy





## Issues Related to Forestry and Agriculture

- **How does the system ensure that reductions are maintained over time?**
  - The system requires continuous reporting.
  - Once carbon sequestration is registered – the entity must continue to report each year.
  - If a registry shows a negative balance (carbon stock losses) the losses are reported in EIA documents and the entity cannot register additional reductions
- **Can land owners receive reductions by shifting practices?**
  - No, large entities must provide comprehensive inventories of all greenhouse gas sources and sinks.
  - Small entities must certify that the actions being reported do not cause an increase in emissions elsewhere under the entities' control.



## Treatment of Forests in Proposed 1605b Guidelines

### **Natural Disturbance:**

- **Reporters may choose to exclude losses resulting from natural disturbances from their registered reductions. Natural disturbances include:**
  - **Fire,**
  - **Pest,**
  - **Extreme weather, or**
  - **Disease**
- **Reporters must continue to track carbon stocks on lands that have experienced disturbances.**
- **Once carbon stocks have returned to pre-disturbance levels, additional carbon can be registered.**





# Treatment of Forests in Proposed 1605b Guidelines

## **Incidental Lands**

- **Incidental lands are a minor component of an entity's operations and are not actively managed for production of goods and services (e.g., right of ways).**
- **Reporters may choose to assume there is no change in carbon stocks on incidental lands as long as they are not converted to other uses during the reporting period.**
- **Entities must report on the area and type of incidental lands owned and certify that the land use has not changed.**



## Treatment of Forests in Proposed 1605b Guidelines

### Forest Preservation

- **Entities that conserve existing forest carbon stocks can report and register reductions from these actions.**
- **The land must be placed under:**
  - **Permanent conservation easements, or**
  - **Have deed restrictions that limit their use and ensure the conservation of existing carbon stocks.**
- **Entities can register 1/100<sup>th</sup> of the base carbon stocks on those lands plus any incremental carbon stocks gained each year.**





# Treatment of Forests in Proposed 1605b Guidelines

## Harvested Wood Products

- **Responsibility for sequestration and emissions are assigned to land owner.**
  - **Users of wood products would not report on emissions from wood products, treating the carbon emissions as biogenic.**
- **Land owners can either:**
  - **Use models to estimate and track the changes in wood products carbon pools from lands harvested, reporting the changes in each subsequent year, or**
  - **Use an estimate of the 100-yr residual carbon stock and count that amount in the year of harvest.**



# Next Steps

## Review

- DOE has initiated a 60-day public review period
- Web sites
  - [www.usda.gov/oce/gcpo/greenhousegasreporting.htm](http://www.usda.gov/oce/gcpo/greenhousegasreporting.htm)
  - [www.pi.energy.gov/enhancingGHGregistry/](http://www.pi.energy.gov/enhancingGHGregistry/)

## Technical assistance, outreach, and education

- Determine roles for USDA cooperators (i.e., extension service, state conservationists, NRCS Technical Centers, and field offices).
- Continue research to improve measurement, monitoring, and verification
- Technical Assistance and Outreach
  - Demonstrations
  - User-friendly manuals
  - Training sessions
  - Guidance to technical support providers